



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

bid for the Catholic vote. The reason for the "custom" to which Professor Ruffini attributes so much power is that the Catholic church is first, last, and always a powerful, strongly organized political party, whereas this is in no sense true of any of the other denominations.

It must be admitted, moreover, that as a matter of fact where there is a state church the separatist churches never do have a fair deal. For a conspicuous example take the present religious situation in England where the established church is seeking in every possible way to crowd Dissenters to the wall.

True religious liberty, Ruffini thinks, had its origin among the Socinians, and he almost would lead us to believe that wherever it has appeared it can be traced back to them. But many will find it difficult historically to connect up in all the cases that he suggests. They will rather be inclined to find explanations in the well-known principle that like causes tend to produce like effects.

Moreover, at the end of the book we are left with the conviction that in the opinion of the author religious liberty and religious indifference are very nearly synonymous. He seems to be conscious of this, for following the two currents of Socinianism and Separatism he says: "Finally we can admit that in the fundamental conception of the followers of the first current, and throughout their work there transpired the dominant and characteristic note of the whole of their mentality, that is to say, *skepticism*. But here we must also bring against separatism the charge of never having been able to divest itself completely of the character which was imprinted upon it at its birth—the character, let it be said without irreverence, of *fanaticism*."

But, as we have already suggested, no short notice can do justice to a book of such massive learning and elaboration.

The Poets of the Old Testament. By Alex. R. Gordon. New York: G. H. Doran Co., 1912. Pp. xiv+368. \$1.50.

The aim of this book is "to bring home the results [of much recent and important work upon the poetry of the Old Testament], as a unified whole, to the English reader."

This general purpose is here admirably accomplished. But Dr. Gordon has not failed to enrich the volume by much that is distinctly his own. The translations are all original, and the sympathetic appreciation of, and insight into, the soul of Hebrew poetry are not such as come at second hand.

An initial chapter sets forth the general characteristics of Hebrew poetry. Then the folk-poetry is listed and surveyed rapidly. This is followed by a study of the various kinds of

musical accompaniments to Hebrew song. Afterward, the books of Lamentations, Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Song of Songs, and Ecclesiastes are expounded in succession. Dr. Gordon has not given us another *Introduction to the Poetry of the Old Testament*, but rather an exposition of its contents. Questions of introduction are touched upon, to be sure, but only lightly; they are made wholly subsidiary to the more important task of interpretation.

As indicative of the author's critical standpoint, it may be noted that he declares that "it is now impossible to distinguish with any certainty the Davidic Element in the Psalter." That is, whatever Davidic psalms there were have been so edited and revised as to have lost nearly all semblance of their original form and content. The earliest psalms, in their present form, are placed in the days prior to the Exile; but the first "Davidic" Psalter was not completed until after the work of Ezra and Nehemiah. The second "Davidic" collection (Pss. 51-72) originated in the following century. Many psalms come from the late Persian and Greek periods, and not a few from the Maccabean age. The I of the Psalter represents to a large extent the Jewish community, rather than any individual speaker. The Book of Job originated in the period following the restoration from exile as a prose story of a pious man tried to the utmost, but steadfast throughout and finally rewarded with abundant prosperity. The poetical portion of the book was written, at a somewhat later date, by an author who was unable to heal the hurt of the daughter of his people so lightly. The Elihu speeches (chaps. 32-37) are a later contribution, and many other passages have been freely added to the original work by editors too solicitous regarding the effect of the books' unchallenged teachings.

The bulk of Proverbs, viz., chaps. 10-29, goes back, at least in collected form, only as far as the fourth century B.C.; while the rest of the book must be accounted for before the end of the third century B.C. The Song of Songs is a collection of love-songs, rather than a drama, and had its origin in the latter part of the third century B.C. In his treatment of Ecclesiastes, Dr. Gordon follows in the footsteps of McNeile and Barton.

Any student desirous of knowing what modern scholarship has to say about the origin and meaning of the poetic literature of the Old Testament will find here just what he needs. He will, furthermore, not be confronted continually by the dry bones of scholarship, but will be shown the way into a fuller understanding of this rich literature and a higher appreciation of the character of a people capable of producing such a series of exalted religious forms in the midst of conditions that were anything but helpful to the growth of faith in God.